(b) the total amount so far spent on the project;

(c) how soon Government expect to complete the balance planned work;

(d) whether it is a fact that large amount spent on the project has not been properly used;

(e) whether Government will appoint Expert Committee to go into the progress made so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND REPORTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Under the first phase of the Ganga Action Plan started in June, 1985, so far, 254 schemes have been completed out of 261 schemes sanctioned. An expenditure of about Rs. 450 crore has been incurred on the Action Plan till date. Work on the second phase of the Ganga Action Plan relating to the main stem of the river to cover the left-over components have also been approved at a cost of Rs. 648 crore. These works are in the initial stage of implementation and an amount of Rs. 11 crore has been spent on them so far.

(c) The remaining works of the first phase of the Ganga Action Plan are targetted for completion by 31.3.99, and that of the second phase relating to the main stem of the river by December, 2001.

(d) The funds released to the State Government under the first phase of the Ganga Action Plan have been used for the project except on some occasions when diversions were reported and necessary corrective actions were taken by the Government for recoupment.

(e) The Government have appointed a Project Advisory Committee of Exprets to go into the progress of implementation as well as operation and maintenance aspects of the Ganga Action Plan.

Ganga Cleaning Authority

1993. SHRI JOYANTA ROY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the date and object for which the Ganga Cleaning authority was set up;

(b) the progress made by the Authority to achieve its declared objects;

(c) whether Government are satisfied that the work has proceeded as per the schedules; and

(d) if not, what steps Government propose to take in order to ensure that work is completed within the minimum time to their complete satisfaction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTERY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) The Central Ganga Authority called the National River Conservaiton Authority with effect from 5th September, 1995 and chaired by the Prime Minister, was set up through a Government resolution dated 16th February, 1985. The objective of the Authority was to improver the water quality of the Ganga and its tributaries to acceptable standards through mobilisation of all agencies, such as State Government, local bodies, voluntary agencies and other organisations interested in this task.

(b) With the first phase of the Ganga Action Plan nearing completion, about 82% of the targetted capacity of sewage treatmet has been created. Wherever such works have been operational, the water quality of the river has improved.

(c) and (d) The implementaiton of the Ganga Action Plan has been delayed considerably due to problems of land acquisition, litigations, contractual disuputes and diveresion of funds. All these issues were taken up at the appropriate level in the State Government for speedy rectificaiton.

Distruction of Forests in Orissa

1994. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister o ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be plesed to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the growing destruction of forests in Orissa;

(b) whether the poaching of rare species is also going on unabated in that State; and

(c) if so, the details of the steps taken to stop the valuable forest resources and wild animals from destruction?